

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are presently pending in this application, of which claims 4-6 are withdrawn from further consideration.

The Examiner rejects claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Vinson *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,374,324) (“Vinson”) in view of Bourgois (U.S. Patent No. 4,840,214).

The Examiner rejects claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Vinson in view of Bourgois as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Edwards (U.S. Patent No. 4,126,720).

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections in view of the following remarks.

Claim 1 is hereby amended to recite a “predetermined” pitch, which is not just any pitch, but rather a pitch determined beforehand. Moreover, in order to address the Examiner’s comments, claim 1 is further amended to recite that “at a time immediately after the cord units pass through holes formed in the inserter for arranging the cord units at said predetermined pitch, the cord units are coated around their peripheries and integrally united with the uncured rubber.” This language is supported in the specification (see paragraph 25) and the drawing figures (Figs. 1B and 3). Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 as amended requires a specific time element (i.e., “at a time immediately after”) such that it is improper for the Examiner to interpret claim 1 as requiring only that there are no other steps between aligning the cord units and applying a coating. Moreover, the amended claim ties the structure of the inserter (i.e., a time

immediately after the cord units “pass through holes formed in the inserter”) to the method (i.e., the cord units are “coated around their peripheries and integrally molded with the uncured rubber”).

Regarding Vinson’s Fig. 3, the Examiner’s attention is respectfully directed to the attached Explanatory Drawing to demonstrate that there is no clear teaching in this reference that the cords are coated at a time immediately after they pass through holes in an inserter (not shown) for arranging the cords at a predetermined pitch. Specifically, it is impossible to determine from Fig. 3 precisely where (or even if) the cords are being arranged in the extruder head 122 at a predetermined pitch in the same plane. As shown in the Explanatory Drawing, the opening in the head 122 just to the right of where the uncured rubber 142 is applied could be a slot that has no effect in arranging the cords in a predetermined pitch. What is needed in Vinson is a cross-sectional view of the extruder head 122, but there are no such views in Vinson’s drawing figures, nor any explanation (since Vinson is not concerned with this feature of the present invention). Accordingly, the claimed features are not inherent, nor is there any fair suggestion to perform the claimed method.

Since Vinson is deficient for the reasons sets forth above, and since Bourgois and Edwards clearly fail to supply the deficiencies of Vinson, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is allowable, and that claims 2 and 3 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.116
U.S. SERIAL NO. 09/972,942

ART UNIT 1732
Q65006

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby earnestly solicited. If there are any points remaining in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees (except the Issue/Publication Fees) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

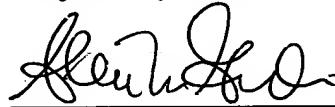
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Date: March 18, 2005